A scenic landscape of Jezera on the island of Murter, Croatia. The image shows a body of water in the foreground, with a concrete structure (possibly a well or a small building) on the right. The sky is a mix of blue and orange, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The text "O JEZERA, VILLAGE BY THE SEA" is overlaid in large white letters.

O JEZERA, VILLAGE BY THE SEA

INTANGIBLE AND TANGIBLE CULTURAL FOLK HERITAGE OF JEZERA ON THE ISLAND OF MURTER



HANDICRAFT

OGRICAS OF JEZERA

Ogrica is special embroidery with multicoloured glass beads around the collar and down the front of women's lace blouses (opleća in the local dialect), made by the women of Jezera as a distinct detail of women's folk costume in Jezera and the neighbouring localities. It is thought that this decoration appeared in the 19th century when the embroidered multicoloured blouse (navezeno opleće) was replaced by white lace blouse (bilo opleće). The motifs embroidered with the glass beads were leaf, flower, cross, square, rectangle, circle, letters... Names of people and places were also embroidered. Female members of the Koledišće Folklore Society embroider ogricas on blouses even today as required for the society. Ogrica details are also embroidered in the form of

bracelets or inside a wooden frame as souvenirs of Jezera.

JEZERA BRIDAL WREATH

Historical Jezera decoration on the heads of brides, worn by women from Jezera during weddings till the middle of the twentieth century. The wreaths are made today by Mrs. Anka Bilan in their original form or miniaturised as souvenirs. Examples of the wreath can be found in the Ethnography Museum in Zadar and in the Heritage Exhibition in the chapel of St John in Jezera. The wreath is made of wool and cotton thread, and silk ribbons (kurdelas and cendals in dialect).

SPARA OF JEZERA

Spara is the round firm pad that the women of Jezera used to put on their heads when they

were carrying weights on their heads (baskets, water containers), made of multicoloured fabric, connected and decorated with embroidery. Sparas are made today by Mrs. Anka Bilan and the female members of the Koledišće Folklore Society.

UTILITY OBJECTS AND MINIATURES

Utility objects that once were used in households and everyday situations – some of them are used even today – in both their standard form and as miniatures are crafted by the Matešin family

JEZERA TALJA

Talja is a wooden pulley on masts of old wooden boats used to pull halyards, lift cargo, fishing nets. As a souvenir, talja is crafted, just like many other souvenirs denoting Jezera, by the Bisage Tourist Agency in Jezera.

PUDARICA OF JEZERA

Pudarica is a pile of stones in the form of truncated cone, made of irregular rocks in seven layers one above another with each getting smaller towards the top. It is located on the Murtar hill above Jezera and, according to scientists, it served both as the watch tower and lighthouse over the eponymous bay in ancient times. In 1000 BC, the neighbouring Murtarić peninsula was the location of a Liburnian settlement so it's thought that pudarica is from the same time. It is also thought that its Liburnian name (MOR - sea, TAR - fort) gave the name to this part of the island and later even to the whole island of Murter. Pudarica as a souvenir of Jezera,

made of stone and olive wood, is crafted by the Bisage Travel Agency in Jezera.

FOLK CUSTOMS

JEZERA SAILOR BALL

Jezera Sailor Ball is an interesting and special custom that could be found in Jezera, a place of sailors and fishermen, up to 1960s. In 1970, when the Koledišće Folklore Society was founded, it was staged as a part of the Society's program and is now performed during folklore evenings, various events, reviews and festivals in Jezera as well as both in country and abroad.

The Croatian National Television's ethnographic film *O Jezera, Place by the Sea*, featuring a part of the Jezera Sailor Ball, was shown at a festival of ethnographic films in France where it received recognition from the association of folklore societies of France.

The exact age of this custom is not known. It is assumed its roots are in the 19th century when many young men from Jezera went to sail the seas around the world in sailing ships and later in steamships. As the voyages were long and the sailors were separated from their dearest for years, their family and relatives would give a farewell ball.

In 1911, the sailors of Jezera founded the Company of Jezera Sailors, called "šocija naviganti" by the locals, which would give a Jezera Sailor Ball whenever a young sailor went to the sea for the first time.

It was mostly Jezera sailors and their families who participated in the ball, and it would be held in a closed space or in a courtyard surrounded by high walls.



That's when mandolins were obtained which, together with the existing accordions (first diatonic ones and later accordions with keyboards) and guitars, were used to accompany the dances and songs of the ball.

The ball was presided over by the capo of the ball that took care that everything was done according to the established order. The capo was a respectable older active seaman or a pensioner but he could be substituted by somebody else who got his recommendation and consent. People usually danced in Jezera costumes of different types and eras. What particularly stood out was the costume worn by girls and women from seafaring families, where silk and brocade predominated, as well as the men's costume of older type (fringed coats and embroidered

waistcoats) and seamen dressed in "Dalmatian suits" (sailor's way) with gold and silver sailor buttons and clasps.

The custom was in abeyance during World War II. After the war, a part of the custom could be seen in the seafront send-off when not only sailors were sent off from Jezera but also all the people going away for various reasons (going abroad, joining the army, going to other towns). When the ship line between Jezera and Šibenik (and other towns) was cancelled in the 1960s and there was no waving goodbye at the seafront or throwing flowers into the sea anymore, the custom slowly disappeared.

At the instigation of old seamen (Marin Jelovčić, 1905-1994; Jure Klarin, 1920-2004) and their wives (Ruža Jelovčić, 1896-1978; Ivanica Klarin, 1920-2009) who also were the chief informants as

well as other residents who added details to the memories of the chief informants, participants in the ball, the Koledišće Folklore Society renewed and staged this custom in 1970. The ball is one of nice Jezera stories and it went like this:

Towards the evening, the guests gather at the prearranged location where, as usual, they eat and drink a little and then the capo of the ball and his bosom friend start singing in the old-time way:

*O my vila, on the tenth of May
From this land I go away
I am leaving my old friends
And Jezera, my native land*

Then a group of women and girls sings:

*O Jezera, place by the sea
My dear courtyard with a pine
Where I was born
Where for a sailor I was born
In the far-away world is my sailor
I will send him a rosemary posy*

*For rosemary's scent is fine
And my sailor for me will pine*

When the capo of the ball gives his sign, the musicians start playing the intro and everybody starts preparing for dance. They stand in two lines opposite each other (women on one side, men on the other) and sing, first men and then all together, with music accompaniment:

*O my vila, I'm leaving soon
O my dear, I'm leaving it all
Father, mother and my kin
And Jezera my dear home
Fare thee well my dear Koledišće
And white rocks down below
Fare thee well, my hill of green
For a long time I'll be gone*

(The song is usually started by a young sailor leaving for his first voyage.)

The capo of the ball comes out and says: "This gala is a gift for (Jure, Ive, or any other name).

Take your girl by the hand and into the circle!" The musicians play the circle dance; the men approach the women, bow, take their partners, gather in a circle and dance.

When the capo of the ball shouts:

*Our company is a merry one
Play the four pass dance*

That's when the musicians play the four-pass dance and when he shouts "two-pass," they, of course, play the announced dance.

There is a short break, people eat and drink again, and then a group of women sings the first part of the following song:

*The ship is casting off
Sounding the horn thrice
It's the sign that the ship is going away
That the fair vila spills her tears*

In the meantime, the young seaman and his girlfriend (or wife, if he's married) come to the middle of the dance area where she tells him verses, kisses him, and gives him a bunch of flowers:

*Go my darling, plough the seas
Don't caress another
If you do caress another there
Don't forget me here*

*Farewell, my darling, luck goes with you
Here's a bunch of flowers for you
This bunch will gladden you
When you're on the sea*

The group of women then sings the second part of the song:

*The ship is leaving and stirring the sea
Goodbye my lover, my sweet talker*





*Goodbye my house and plank doors
Goodbye my darling, my golden apple*

Men can join the group of women for the last two verses. And then the men sing the song “Do not cry, my dear darling”

*Do not cry, my dear darling
Do not torment your heart
If I go to the sea, my darling
And don't come back, do not cry, do not cry
Just remember me
And our love, do not cry, do not cry*

After that, the capo of the ball says:

*Dance now, fair-faced vila
Here's the clapping polka*

which is then danced by pairs all over the dancing area or around the young sailor and his girlfriend

who dance in the middle of the dancing area (circle).

Afterwards, the women sing:

*Holy Cecilia's day will come
Who will kiss my face?
People are dancing, boys and girls are making merry
You're not here, my bonny flower*

*Dance is wheeling on St. John's day
Every girl with her sweetheart
Dance is wheeling till the end of the day
You're not here, my dear sweetheart*

The pairs are standing in a circle and sing along with the singers while the young sailor raises his hands at the end of the song and that's where the sung “crossing dance” is danced.

*Crossing dance is wheeling
Till the setting of the sun*

*Young sailors are dancing
And nimble fishermen
Young girls are dancing
Pretty as golden apples
Crossing dance is wheeling
Till the setting of the sun*

From one side, after the dance, women sing:

*O blue sea if you could talk
I could send my love to somebody
Send my love to my bonny flower
My darling in the far-away world*

*O blue sea, don't raise your waves
My young sailor is going to get hurt
O blue sea, please stay calm
'Cause my darling is still not strong enough*

*O blue sea, there's too much salt in you
Where are you, my darling, I haven't seen you so long
Where are you, my darling, and my consolation?*

Is this going to be our fortune?

While the song is sung, several girls and women – usually four of them – dance the “women's tršeta,” an old-time dance without music accompaniment, using the song as the music background.

When the singers sing:

*The horizon hides you, my darling
Go fly my letter, find him alive
You, branch of rosemary, come down
To the ground and you, darling, come to me*

the “tršeta circle dance” is danced and all the pairs participate. This song also serves as the music background because this dance doesn't have music accompaniment either.

When the leader of the dance (usually a young seaman) raises his hand, the dance stops and the

capo of the ball shouts
 There's still more time
 Can't get enough of balarin
 the last dance – balarin – is danced. It can last
 for a long time and when the dancers tire, the
 leader leads them into “snail” or “knot” around
 the musicians to end the dance or he passes under
 raised arms of one or two pairs if there is a larger
 number of pairs, straightens the dancing circle
 into a line and raises his hand to stop the dance.
 At the end of the dance, dancers often applaud
 the musicians and then all go to the seafront to
 send the young sailor off to his ship.
 The following songs are sung:

*O my dearest love
 Why do you leave me
 Why do you leave me
 in my tender years
 and full of sorrow
 As a mother wants
 Her son from across the sea
 So I want, my soul,
 Your sweet talk
 O my dearest love
 My green pine
 Come and make happy
 This sorrowful heart of mine*

*A maiden sat by the sea on cold rock
 She watched the blue sea and the waves.
 She takes a rose from her bosom and throws it into the
 sea
 Sail, sail, sweet rose of mine, and say hello to my
 darling.*

*At departure, I say goodbye to everybody
 To my native Jezera*



*To all the people in it
 But mostly I say goodbye to you, my dear*

*At departure, I will cry
 Wipe my tears - you will give me your kerchief
 All the tears will remain on your kerchief
 Just like you will remain in my heart*

Everybody takes leave from the young sailor who
 boards the ship, everybody waves and throws
 flowers into the sea after the ship that goes and
 takes away yet another young being from his
 native Jezera to wide open seas.

Jezera Sailor Ball is staged every year on the
 anniversary of the foundation of the Company
 of Jezera Sailors around May 10, which coincides
 with the renovation of St Nicholas chapel from
 the 15th century in the bay of Murtar. The Jezera

Sailor Ball is performed in the evening in the
 Jezera Square, with an exhibition of handicrafts
 and local cuisine. Tomorrow morning, a
 procession of decorated boats goes towards the
 Murtar bay to St Nicholas chapel where the locals
 and their guests attend mass.

BALARIN

An old-time dance in the tanac type (both
 circle and line dancing), danced in Jezera. The
 music accompaniment consists of a diatonic
 accordion, classical accordion, and mandolins.
 Taking the age of the dance into consideration,
 it was probably accompanied by bagpipes during
 its history, too. It is danced in pairs and lines
 arranged into a cross or a flower. It is most often
 danced by eight pairs lined in two pairs opposite
 each other.

The dance consists of ten figures:

- 1) Taking hands
- 2) First bridge
- 3) Shaking
- 4) Passing
- 5) Mažulin
- 6) Counter
- 7) Second bridge
- 8) Whirl
- 9) Circle dance
- 10) Snail or knot

The dance was most often danced at the Jezera
 Sailor Ball as the last, most temperamental dance
 and the first eight figures were repeated as often
 as the capo of the ball and dancers wanted. If the
 leader of the dance wanted to end the dance, he
 would start the circle dance. As all the dances at
 the Jezera Sailor Ball are danced on command,

the start of this dance is marked by the capo of the ball. Most often by shouting, "Can't get enough of balarin!"

GIFTING – A PART OF THE JEZERA WEDDING

After the wedding, the wedding guests go to the house of bride's parents for a parting lunch. The female guests from the groom's side go for a lunch at groom's parents. After the meal, several women with decorated baskets on their heads, carrying sweets and drink, go from there to the bride's house. When they come to the courtyard, they sing announcing it's time for the bride to take leave of her parents and go towards her new home. That's where ceremonial circle dances and merry dances in pairs are danced. Afterwards they go singing towards the groom's house. The songs and dances that occur most often in Jezera weddings, particularly at this part:

*Give us ours, we don't ask for yours
Give us our fair maiden
Who was promised to our man*

*Cheers
This walnut cup
Veneered with silver and gold
Everybody's going to drink from it
Everybody will be healthy of it
We give a prayer
For the health of our brother and his bride
The bride drank
Made a toast to the best man
The best man will also drink
Toast whomever he wants
Both the drink and the toast
In your honour
Best man, our brother*

*I would sing but I can't do that alone
My friend has an aching head
Sing my friend, the headache will pass
I cannot sing alone
We will sing and dance, my friend
The ache will pass by itself
A bit of wine and bit of brandy
That's medicine for your head
Sing my friend, you're already married
I will be soon, I'm not a baby anymore*



*Dance, dance, dance, there's a bride in the dance
With a blouse, stitched with white thread, embroidered
with red
Kiss, kiss, bride, whomever you want
Just not the one you don't like
If you have nobody, leave the dance*

Music for the couple

*Do not pick the white rose, my darling (3x)
Do not water it with the water cold
The white rose is my heart (3x)
Pining for your love*

Changing polka

*Two white doves were kissing
Boy and girl were watching (2x)
White are the feathers on the dove
Even whiter the face of the girl (2x)
Red is the beak of the dove
Even redder the lips of the girl (2x)
Kiss me, my dove, and I'll kiss you
Kiss me and I'll kiss you and we'll be together*

*Fare thee well, bride's mother
We took your sun away
You still have those small and weak
But you'll raise them strong again*

In its shortened form, the gifting is a part of the Koledišće Folklore Society programme but they can also be seen at local weddings if people decide to have such a wedding.

ARCHAIC FOLK SINGING IN JEZERA ON THE ISLAND OF MURTER

Archaic singing for two voices in Jezera is the oldest way of singing. It was most often used for



narrative songs because the song was used for story-telling. Melodies are simple and differ just in variants. The songs are usually sung in tetrastichs or distichs (“singing twice”). This way of singing is called in Jezera “old-time singing,” “singing the old way,” “Jezera singing.” Those songs are most often sung at various feasts, ceremonies, weddings, before an old-time dance, with a circle dance but they were also used for everyday communication in spare time. Such songs are also called “old airs” in Jezera. The tunes end in unison or in second, which is an older way or in quint (bass), which is a newer way. The endings in unison or in second are most usually sung by two or three women while the ending with bass is sung by a bigger group of

women. Men are singing the songs the same or a similar way, separately or together with women although it’s usual that men like the klapa singing more. A similar way of singing can also be found, in larger or smaller amounts, in other settlements on Murter and around Šibenik (Vodice, Tribunj, Zlarin, for instance). As ožkanje singing was put on the UNESCO list of Croatian intangible cultural heritage, we hope that this way of singing could also be put on the same list. Similar songs can be found on other islands in the Adriatic and we are certain that it’s the oldest way of singing among Croats. For instance, the respected Croatian ethnomusicologist Vedrana Milin-Čurin wrote about singing on the island of Murter where she

paid particular attention to the traditional local songs (Vedrana Milin-Čurin: Pjevanje na otoku Murteru, p. 45, 5.2).

PREPERUŠAS

An ancient custom or, as the Jezera old-times would say, fandonia (ritual, belief in supernatural) performed in the hot summer months. It’s one among the so-called dodola customs in our country when the people would call rain with prayer, song, and dance to soak the thirsty gardens and fields.

This custom started disappearing from Jezera during the 1970s and today it can mainly be found in the Koledišće Folklore Society programme although one can sometimes find a couple of boys and girls singing Preperušas Went but not the whole custom.

The participants in the custom were children, mostly between 9 and 13. They would carry twigs in their hands (mostly olive, almond, and holm oak), brandish them and sing through Jezera:

*Preperušas went
Praying to God
Give, o God, a little rain
And heavenly dew
So the year is fruitful
With golden wheat
With grape on the vine
With green olives
Give us cheese, give us eggs
It will be our gift*

In front of those who were giving them gifts, the children would sing and dance children’s dances: Dance, dance, all around, we all went to playground, Clap, clap, dad is coming, Dance, bear with raven hairs... If the people in the house

had had music instruments (mandolin, guitar, accordion), they would have accompanied the children's dances and sung along.

At the end, the children would thank the people from the house and moved on singing, and the lady of the house would spill a bit of water after them, for luck, so the rain they were inviting would fall.

Preperušas, that is, the children performing the custom were dressed in the Jezera folk costume. The most distinct was the small preperuša (sometimes there were two), all in white with a floral wreath on her head and a basket in her hand where people would put gifts. Preperušas can be seen in the programme of the Koledišće Folklore Society.

BLOT OUT MY OFFENCE –

Lenten folk song in the Our Lady of Health parish in Jezera on the island of Murter
Selection and cultural animation: Ivica Bračanov, Nenad Milin, Joško Čaleta

With the Lenten folk singing concert, the singers of the Our Lady of Health parish represent a centuries-old music tradition built and passed down through generations of excellent singers in this small community. The group of singers gathered in the Jezera church choir consists of about thirty women and men. They are excellent singers, naturally talented, musical, with terrific singing abilities. They are graced with open voices, full-throated ringing sound, high intonation, particularly in women.

There are very few communities like Jezera that can boast today of such lively and interesting church folk heritage. What can be noticed

even today in their singing and musical communication is the heritage of the glagolitic church singing. We find evidence of glagolitic church in documents and will from the 16th century on, as in Matricula of Blessed Lady in Jezera (1629) or as in two parish registers from the 19th century written in Glagolitic. There are parish priests through history who didn't know Latin (for instance, Ivan Parožić, 17th century) and there's the fact that up to the middle of the 19th century priests coming from Jezera were exclusively glagolitic. That old-time singing was saved by the Jezera singers mostly by using the rite book of Fra Petar Vlašić (1926). The fact is proudly pointed out by the choir leader of the Jezera parish, Ivica Bračanov:

“In singing the evening masses, we still use old books, particularly the one by Vlašić. We sing in two parts. It's particularly solemn during the Holy Week and on Easter Monday when we sing the evening mass 'our way.' We have retained many customs, like our traditional Good Friday procession, in spite of all misfortunes and adversities.”

It's exactly because of the individuals like Ivica that the spirit of old-time singing is still alive today. During the times when the parish priests in Jezera were not as musically talented, the active singers from the people took over some of their duties in singing both liturgical and paraliturgical parts. That's what happened with Ivica Bračanov (1957), a talented amateur, an accordionist, an



organist who, through his direct involvement, helped preserve the church musical heritage in Jezera. His example shows how the tradition has been passed down orally and faithfully. He's been singing in the church from an early age, he was an altar boy since he was six, and when he sung a "pištola" (an epistle) solo for the first time, he was 11. The singers themselves recognised his talent and invited him into the choir. Since then, he has been singing and finally took the leadership of the choir.

A counterpart of the church folk music in Jezera is the extremely active Koledišće Folklore Society. Former and current active members of the Society are also active singers in the church, too. The founder and long-time leader of the group, Nenad Milin, whose diligent activities contributed to the survival and quality of the church folk singing. Because of the changes in the way of life, the male singers, who had been upholders of the heritage of singing for centuries, were joined by women who had had a more passive role till the second half of the 20th century. That's when they started participating more actively, first by singing Our Lady's songs followed then by "little Mass" and afternoon devotions. In older times, they sung only "Lady's Weeping" independently and only so that the first would start each verse and they would continue. They are equal today and, in some situations, the only upholders of the singing heritage. It was possible in Jezera because church and secular folk singing is characterised by similar musical characteristics, expressed in tonal and rhythmical patterns as well as in the ways polyphony is formed.

Tonal relations are characterised by a tonal series of just several (4-5) tones. Solo performances

are somewhat larger and coincide with the rhythmical chanting of the text which flows through a logical music phrase adapted to the text. The tunes are performed either in monophony or polyphony, depending on the kind, function, and purpose in the mass. Most tunes are performed polyphonically, most often in two voices. The two part singing, where the lower voice follows with simple changes with usually unison endings is the chief characteristic both of secular and church folk singing in Jezera. Nowadays the unison ending increasingly has an addition, the lower voice in quint creating



the so-called quintal two-voice harmony, also known as singing in bass. Most often, it's just one male voice that can be firm and distinct. Old endings when one voice goes from unison to second are rare and almost non-existent in the church folk singing nowadays. It's interesting to note that most airs are now performed in two parts (responsorially) where two leaders start the choirs singing alternately. During the Lent and Advent, the singing was gloomier or sotto voce, quieter and more drawn out. Solemn airs are even today called "kantanje" (as in cantata) as opposed to "prosto" (simple) for those more ordinary and uncomplicated. It has to be stated that singing used to be, according to Bračanov, somewhat sharper and simpler, with less melismas and much more from an open throat, louder.

The concert is conceived as a section of musical activities during the Lent and particularly during the Holy Week when the singers in Jezera are most active in a number of church rituals. It starts with a representation of the Palm Sunday procession, one of a number of processions in Jezera that have survived till today. Some of them have disappeared like the folk procession on Good Friday at 4 AM, consisting just of the faithful without a priest, where a large cross used to be carried.

Among the airs that stand out is certainly psalm 51, "Create in Me a Clean Heart, O God," that used to be sung at Benediction in the Lent, then Act of Contrition "I am sorry," and then "Stood the mournful Mother weeping" accompanying the Stations of the Cross during the Lent. What's also interesting is the representation of Maundy Thursday where the antiphon "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" is sung with

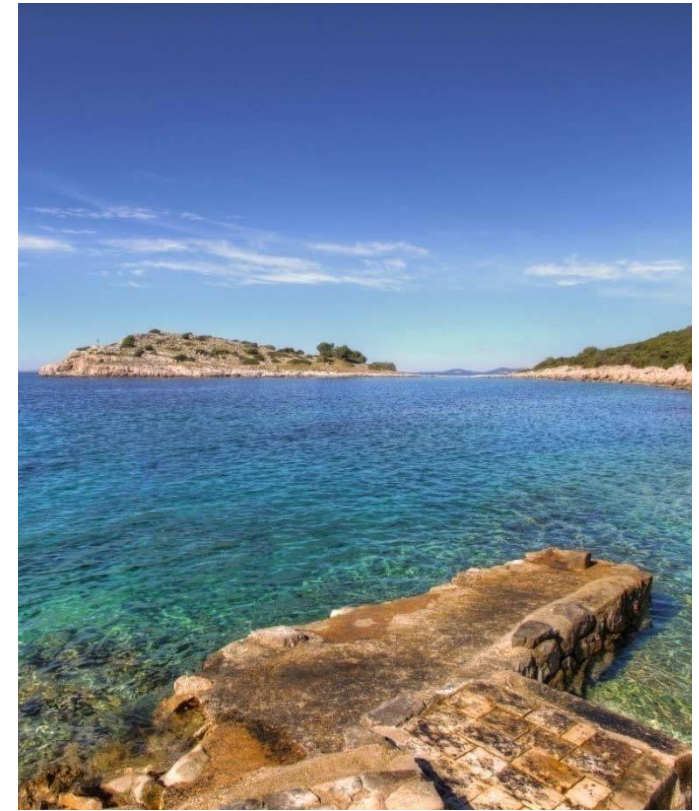


psalm 22 at the end of the mass, when the altars are stripped. The rite ends with the singing of the first half of Lady Weeping, sung in Jezera according to the text by Fra Petar Knežević (The time has come) in two parts, the men in one choir and the women in another. The most of the examples come from the Good Friday rites (“O My People”, hymn “Royal Banners Issue Forth,” song “Suffering of Our Lord,” and psalm 135, “Confess to the Lord, for he is good”) but one also finds interesting the Holy Saturday rites connected with the blessing of the water. The night procession on Good Friday has been, as in most of our coastal settlements, retained. The procession is accompanied by the sound of clappers and lit by lanterns and candles. The procession is led by a group of boys and younger men who carry the symbols of Christ’s suffering. After the church singers (“kapela”) have sung the verses, they repeat the same chorus, “God, have

mercy on me.” They often sing very robustly and loud. In fact, they represent the mob that asked for Jesus to be crucified so they use the same “shouting” to ask God to forgive them (to have mercy). This group is called “the clamourers” in Jezera. This is the only procession that still goes around the village and not only around the church. The old hymn called “Suffering of Our Lord” is sung, where the chorus “Have mercy on me, O God, in your kindness.

In your compassion blot out my offence” gave the name to the custom.

On this occasion, women and men of Jezera are dressed in folk costumes, both the original and faithful reconstructions from the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. Lately, as elsewhere, they wear modern clothes except for the “Guardians of the Holy Sepulchre” who wear the formal folk costume from the first half of the 20th century (“sailor suits”).



JEZERA STORIES AND LEGENDS

When you come to Jezera, you’ll notice that the village is located in a green valley full of flowers – it’s in a deep horseshoe-shaped bay on the south-eastern side of the Murter island. People here appreciate the culture of living in harmony with nature and protect their cultural heritage that, among other things contains stories and legends.

ABOUT THE NAME OF JEZERA

Why name “Jezera” (lakes)? The settlement got its name after two large bodies of water in the vicinity of the village, very important for the existence of people because water always means life. Lake Lokva (pond) is full of water mainly

during the rainy season but it dries up during summer while lake Blato (mud) used to have water all through the year. But in one of the lakes, Blato, malarial mosquitoes suddenly appeared and a lot of the people from Jezera started dying, particularly young people and children. The lake was filled in 1912 after a health commission came from Vienna at the invitation of the locals and determined that the lake was dangerous for the people.

The locals still remember the stories about that part of their past.

ABOUT ST CONSTANTIUS CHAPEL AND MALARIA

St. Constantius, bishop, is the protector from the ills accompanied by high body temperature. That was the reason why a lady from Perugia brought a reliquary to Jezera which contained parts of bones of Saint Constantius who was killed by decapitation during the Roman Empire but the body couldn't be burned because every time it was put into fire, the fire would go out. That's why the common people respect him as the saint who can lower the high, dangerous

body temperature, which accompanies malaria, particularly the "terciana" (the third stage of malaria).

First a little shrine to St. Constantius in the 16th century and then a little church in the 18th century were erected on the Kružak hill on the southern side of the village. The rocks to build the surrounding wall and the chapel were brought mostly by the villagers suffering from malaria, dressed in winter clothes during summer and slowly climbing to the top. The story says that the ones who found the strength to reach



the top recovered while those who succumbed to the illness remained along the way. The medical explanation of the recovery is that profuse sweating and high body temperature (39-40 °C) kills the parasite causing malaria.

The chapel was destroyed in World War II and renovated in 1994. During the last several years, the locals are building the Stations of the Cross along the way to the chapel by their own hands.

ABOUT PUDARICA, MURTAR, AND MURTARIĆ

The past of Jezera goes deeply into the antiquity. A Liburnian settlement was located on the Murtarić peninsula sometime in the 11th century BC. The remains of the great surrounding wall are still visible. Tombs from that era were found in a mound of rocks above a neighbouring bay (Mali Podjasenovac) while another mound of mysterious appearance – called Pudarica by the locals – looking like a truncated cone with seven spiral layers dominates the Murtar bay (St. Nicholas). Historians and archaeologists think that the mound was used by the Illyrians as a beacon and marked the entrance to the protected harbour in the bay. It is hypothesized that there were five more such mounds on the south-eastern side of the Murter island. The hill and the bay have been called Murtar from time immemorial, after the Illyrian and Celtic name (MOR - sea, TAR - fort). It also gives the name to the whole island. There's a chapel of St. Nicholas in the Murtar bay, built on living rock and dedicated to seamen and fishermen, so the bay is also called after the saint.

Beside being the location of the Illyrian settlement in the antiquity, the Murtarić peninsula was in more recent times the meeting



place for women and children who would wave and greet the seamen from Jezera (fathers, husbands, brothers, sons) sailing along the Adriatic and passing by Murtarić. There are also tragic stories about people who jumped from the peninsula's rocks into the sea because of unrequited love.

ABOUT KUKULJAR VODENI AND PIRATES

There's a beautiful view of the distant Kukuljar and Kornati islands from the Murtarić peninsula. There are stone blocks and dry wall on the islet

of Kukuljar-Vodeni (Kukuljar With Water) where there were pirates buried after the battle they had with the inhabitants of Murter. The pirates from Southern Italy used to come over to the Dalmatian coast and islands to raid and loot, attacking by surprise. The inhabitants of the Murter island once gathered and waited for the raiders near the island of Kornat where they killed them and set their boats on fire. Some bodies floated to Kukuljar-Vodeni where the fishermen from Jezera buried them. Even 400 years later (historians claim it happened at the



end of the 16th century) the name the people from Jezera give to that part of the islet is “pirates.” By the way, Kukuljar-Vodeni was so named because of a cave with potable water near the sea.

MERMAID

One of the events told even today among the seamen and fishermen from Jezera is an encounter between a fisherman from Jezera and a mermaid. Our guy was hugely surprised when he was fishing and a beautiful long-haired girl jumped from the sea onto his boat. The fisherman was speechless admiring the beauty of the girl under the summer sun and wondering about her fish tail. They watched each other smiling for a couple of moments and the mermaid then jumped back into the sea and disappeared in the deep.

ABOUT VILAS AND KOLEDIŠĆE

About pretty girls with special appearance, there’s also a legend about a vila dance in Koledišće, an old Jezera square in the part of the settlement called Village, where there used to be the Venetian city hall and where the inhabitants

of the Murter island held meetings. Just before the square was built, an oldster from Jezera was returning home late at night from an osteria (a tavern). In the place where the square was going to be later he saw vilas dancing in a circle. He then saw them pulling a young man into the circle and taking him with them. The old guy witnessing the event got scared a bit and he ran home, later telling everybody what happened. After a year, the kidnapped man returned to Jezera. He couldn’t talk for three days and when he regained speech, he could tell everything about the vilas and their appearance – even that they had horse legs – but he couldn’t talk about what he ate because he would age and die immediately. It is said that he had a long life and looked young for long time. The place where the vilas danced is where now the Jezera weddings dance, where the villagers meet, and where bonfires are lit.

WHY THE ISLANDERS ARE CALLED “BODULI”

The legend says that the Ottomans penetrating from Bosnia reached the coast of the Croatian Adriatic in the second wave of attacks. They then tried reaching the islands, too. They collected a multitude of goat skins and, since they couldn’t swim, used them to try and float to the closer islands. The inhabitants would swim towards them and when their commander would shout, “Buodi duoli!”, they would dive and puncture the skins so the enemy soldiers would drown. When they saw their soldiers dying, the Ottoman commanders gave up on further attempts. They asked the soldiers what happened and the soldiers answered that they only could hear shouting Bou-doli and that people were drown afterwards.



So that’s why the islanders are called boduli, the legend says.

NATURAL CURIOSITIES OR ENDEMIC SPECIES AT THE LAKES

The lakes of Jezera are two large bodies of water on the south-eastern side of the village. Blato or Jezero was filled in because of malaria at the beginning of the 20th century but there are still parts with impermeable soil where there is water until the drought is so hard that everything dries up. Unlike Lokva which has water from autumn till the end of spring, Blato can still have water channels even in the middle of summer. The nature unleashes its forces around the lakes and there are numerous endemic plants growing around them, like the fragrant orchid.

CHURCHES

THE PARISH CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF HEALTH

The parish church of Our Lady of Health is a valuable cultural monument of the Mediterranean Baroque. It was built with beautiful hewn stone from the local quarry and it measures 30x20 metres. The quarrying of the stones started in 1720 under the supervision of Jure Foretić from Korčula. The church got its roof and was consecrated in 1722 and the older church at the same location was torn down (the older church was probably dedicated to St. Stephen). The pavement around the church was laid in 1724. The locals were building churches with their own money so there were no noble patrons. The church has a single nave and two side chapels on the Eastern side as well as a sacristy and a staircase to reach the balconies.

On the eastern side of the church there's a bell tower built from good hewn stone, with a beautiful view of the village and surroundings. There are two balconies in the church, the lower one for the organ and the upper one for the choir. The organ was obtained in 1777, torn down in 1905 and renovated in 2013. The men used to be on the balconies while the women were mostly in the hall of the church. The main altar in the central chapel is made of marble with columns and a gilded silver relief of Mary with baby Jesus in a gilded rectangular frame. There is a tabernacle on the altar with a gilded cross and the monstrance for the Sacred Host is shaped like the sun. There are also six wooden altars which probably remain from the older church in the same location. The altars are named St. Anthony; Pieta (Our Lady of Seven Sorrows) with beautiful



carvings of grapes and vine leaves, considered one of the most beautiful altars in Dalmatia, made in France as a votive offering of Jezera seamen; Our Lady of the Rosary; St. John with Michael (a large oil on canvas painting, probably from the Early Baroque); Our Lady of Mount Carmel; and Saint Rocco.

ST NICHOLAS'S CHAPEL

The chapel of St. Nicholas is located in the other harbour named Murtar (St. Nicholas). It



measures 8,5x4 metres. It used to have an altar painting with St. Nicholas, St. Anthony, and Blessed Mary. The chapel was devastated after World War II and the renovation was finished on May 10, 2011. It's now one of fine examples of the medieval cultural heritage with a newly-made wooden statue of St. Nicholas.

ST ROCCO'S CHAPEL

The chapel of St. Rocco from the 16th century is located in the Jezera fields and measures 5,3x4,7 metres. The wooden altar held a painting of Our Lady of Loreto with St. Rocco and St. Sebastian. The painting was removed during the 1960s. As the locals tell, it was used for camp fire by boy scouts from Belgrade. The chapel was renovated in 2014. There is a new painting of St. Rocco on the altar.

ST JOHN'S CHAPEL

The chapel of St. John of Trogir is located in the More harbour. It measures 9,5x6 metres. It was



renovated in the 1960s. The altar is made of stone and holds a little statue of St. John of Trogir while the altar painting was most probably moved to the parish church of Our Lady of Health in the past. Since 2014, the chapel hosts the heritage exhibition of Jezera.

ST CONSTANTIUS'S CHAPEL

The chapel of St. Constantius on the Kružak hill was built in 1780 in the location of a 16th century chapel. It was repaired in 1920. It was bombed in World War II and renovated in 1994. The stone altar, the spindle (bell tower), and aspersionarium were cut by Abraham Jakov Pavić from Jezera. The altar holds a statue of St. Florian, an altar painting of St. Constantius, and a reliquary of St. Constantius in a wood and glass box (a part of the saint's collarbone was brought from Perugia



in the 17th century). Right beside the altar, there is a life-sized statue of St. Constantius (painted wood), a gift of pilgrims from Perugia in 2012.

All the chapels were renovated through the goodwill of the locals. They were built of hewn stone blocks, not always perfectly regular. All the chapels have crosses on the top of their bell towers except the chapel of St. John of Trogir which has a tongue of flame. The same chapel also has arched windows while the other ones have small square windows. Every chapel has a characteristic little cross-shaped window beneath the spindle.

PRESERVED OLD AREA – STREETS IN SELO

Jezera is a very old place but in spite of changes through the centuries it succeeds in preserving

some of the old folk architecture. It's important to note that in the part of Jezera called Selo there is a number of authentic and expertly renovated houses preserved in the old narrow streets, reminding us of some distant times and our past – the first written mention of Jezera was in 1298.

JEZERA GREEN CAKE

Crumble a cube of fresh yeast into a glass of warm water, add a teaspoon of flour and a teaspoon of sugar. Mix and leave in warm to rise. Put a kilo of flour into a wider bowl. Make an indentation in the middle of the flour and pour the risen yeast, 2-3 pinches of salt, and a tablespoon of olive oil into it. Knead the dough with your hands. Add more warm water if needed.

Leave dough to rise for half an hour. Divide the risen dough into two and stretch each piece on the table (sprinkle flour on the table) to the size of the baking tin and 1.5-2 centimetres thick. Put one part into the baking tin greased with olive oil. The filling consists of 3 or 4 grated apples, a handful of raisins, 2-3 minced bunches of chard, a handful of chopped walnuts, three handfuls of sugar, 1 decilitre of olive oil, a bit of nita, minced parsley and sand leek (or any other wild onions).

Mix the filling in a bowl and fill the dough already in the baking tin. Cover it with the other piece of stretched dough. Fold the edges of the upper and lower piece together. Bake it in the oven at 180°C for half an hour. It is done when the upper crust is golden.